

Appl. No. 09/977,643  
Amdt. dated August 25, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of May 31, 2005

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Please amend claims 19 and 20 as follows:

1. (previously presented): A multiplexed voice communication system, comprising:  
a first plurality of telephone sets connected to first termination equipment which terminates said first plurality of telephone sets in a first location,  
a second plurality of telephone sets connected to second termination equipment which terminates said second plurality of telephone sets in a second location, and  
respective packet network telephone gateways connected to said first and second termination equipment and to a packet network whereby said packet gateways are arranged to multiplex voice telephone calls from said first plurality of telephone sets to said second plurality of telephone sets by establishing a transport level connection which is maintained so long as voice calls are being made between the first and second locations with information from a number of voice telephone calls directed to different ones of said second plurality of telephone sets multiplexed into a single packet.
2. (original): The system of claim 1, wherein said packet network is the Internet.
3. (original): The system of claim 1, wherein a central office comprises said termination equipment.

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4. (original): The system of claim 1, wherein a private branch exchange comprises said termination equipment.

5. (original): The system of claim 2, wherein said packet network telephone gateways operate to establish a packet network connection in response to a request from a user associated with one of said telephone sets and said gateways establish a channel for each user within each said transport level connection.

6. (original): The system of claim 5, wherein said packet network telephone gateways operate to digitize voice signals from said telephone sets, to multiplex blocks of such digitized voice signals onto a transport level connection, and to packetize said multiplexed voice signals.

7. (original): The system of claim 6, wherein said telephone gateways are connected to provide channel identification for each said channel.

Claims 8-18 (cancelled)

19. (currently amended): A telecommunications system employing the Internet in the routing of ~~telecommunications~~ voice information from an origination point to a destination point comprising:

a plurality of communications switches; and

a plurality of Internet transport gateways for interfacing respective ones of communications switches with the Internet such that ~~communications~~ voice information received from different originators at the origination point and exchanged between ones of the gateways is multiplexed at the same transport level connection and in one data packet that is sent over the

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Internet, the same transport level connection is maintained so long as voice information is received from one of the different originators.

20. (currently amended): A telecommunications system employing the Internet in the routing of ~~telecommunications~~ voice information from an origination point to a destination point comprising:

a plurality of communications switches; and  
a plurality of internet transport gateways for interfacing respective ones of the communications switches with the Internet such that ~~communications~~ voice information received from different originators at the origination point and exchanged between ones of the gateways is multiplexed at the same transport level connection and in different data packets that are sent over the Internet.

Please add the following new claims.

21. (new): An apparatus comprising:

an input for receiving a plurality of voice calls; and

an interface telephony gateway establishing a transport level connection over the Internet, multiplexing on the transport level connection voice information from the plurality of voice calls into one data packet, and maintaining the transport level connection so long as voice information is received from one of the plurality of voice calls through the input.

22. (new): A method comprising:

receiving a plurality of voice calls;

establishing a transport level connection over the Internet;

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    multiplexing on the transport level connection voice information from the plurality of  
voice calls into one data packet; and

    maintaining the transport level connection so long as voice information is received from  
one of the plurality of voice calls.